



# THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF EDUCATING CITIES

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**Publication issued to mark the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities held in Barcelona from 13 to 16 November 2014**

**Published by:**

Councillor's Office for the Presidency and Territory  
Resources Management  
General Services Directorate

**Technical support:**

Technical Department and Secretariat of the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities

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**Technical support:**

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**Layout and design:**

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**Publishing rights:** Barcelona City Council

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**Printing:** Municipal Printing Press

## 1. PRESENTATION

### **Organising a new International Association of Educating Cities Congress, 24 years later**

Barcelona introduced the “educating city” concept to the world in 1990. Twenty-four years later, the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities, which we have just held, has been internationally acclaimed thanks to the joint work of a large number of individuals, organisations, associations and businesses in our city and our country that were actively involved in its organisation. In these lines I would therefore like to offer them my sincere gratitude for their work, which has become even more necessary today, despite the advances made in recognising people's rights in our society.

The Congress highlighted once again the importance played by cities in everything relating to education, in the context of certain values they convey in numerous ways. Experiences were analysed and shared, and proposals made, so the world's cities might become ever more educating and inclusive cities, creating wellbeing, health and an interest in the common good among all the people living together in them.

Talks, workshops, roundtables and all the other activities have enriched us and added to the basic goals of the Congress. We must continue to think about all this because, ultimately, it is as cities that we need to work on and carry out this educational role in parallel with traditional education (economic, social, political and service delivery). We must pay special attention to the training, promotion and development of children and young people, with a determination to promote lifelong learning.

This Congress has reminded us once again of the need to keep on promoting inclusive policies. That is why I wish to reiterate my pledge to continue developing proactive and preventive policies even further, so that no one is left behind. Bold proposals for eliminating the causes of exclusion and offering educational, leisure, cultural and sports opportunities that convey the values of inclusion, solidarity and social cohesion.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the participants, both those who travelled a short distance and those who came a long way, and I hope you had an enjoyable stay in our city. We will always welcome you with open arms. And I would like to offer as well my wholehearted congratulations to the organisers and members of the International Association of Educating Cities Executive Committee, for their professionalism and crucial contribution towards the success of this Congress.

A truly important event that has enabled us to share our knowledge and experiences and move forward together in building some of the fairest and most inclusive cities, made for and by the people.

**Xavier Trias**  
Mayor of Barcelona

## 2. THE CONGRESS' KEY POINTS

### Networking while looking to the future

**Jordi Martí i Galbis**, the Chairman of the Organising Committee of the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities

Twenty-four years ago Barcelona launched a course in urban education and socialisation that led to what was the First Congress of Educating Cities in the world. Ever since then, Barcelona has been working non-stop to make its contribution towards the inclusion of socially vulnerable people and urban groups. And it has demonstrated its commitment as an educating city again by organising and hosting a second congress, the thirteenth in total, this year.

The success of the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities puts our city at the centre of the global inclusion of people and their integration in the urban context. Making the most of the educating potential cities have will allow us to lead the way in organising civic players in favour of more equality and welfare. And that explains why one of the most popular maxims among speakers and delegates from around the world during the Congress was “educating cities are the ones that call for and spark action, that include and never abandon or marginalise any social sector”.

In the wake of the Congress Barcelona has been renewing the concepts of equality, inclusion and the fight against social vulnerability. An educating city is one that fights against the solitude of individuals in the midst of many people, by promoting cooperative, committed networks; that turns creativity and social innovation into an inclusive factor; that is capable of inventing the future by turning the excluded into the included. Personal education, integration, inclusion and enrichment of the intellect and thinking are basic rules for coexistence in big cities among many people who differ in every area and aspect. Education is basic and inclusive from all angles, so an educating city is above all an inclusive city. And that is what Barcelona is. It is important to have this broad outlook on education proposed by educating cities.

Educating cities are constantly renewing their commitment to the lifelong learning of their inhabitants. And to make that possible, we must take account of every group and its particular needs. The 13th International Congress of Educating Cities has helped to raise our awareness of and pay closer attention to these values and the goals to be achieved. It has provided a starting point for meeting the new challenges of the future.

As the Councillor for Presidency and Territory at Barcelona City Council and the Chairman of the Congress Organising Committee, I would like to thank the various areas of the City Council whose work has consolidated the interdisciplinary influence so inherent in the term “educating city”. I would also like to express my gratitude for the work done by the Scientific Committee, whose academic rigour and personal commitment have ensured the conceptual soundness of the Congress. And finally, I would like to thank in particular the speakers and delegates for their participation, which has allowed us to put our city and country in the international spotlight and achieve a high level of excellence in the framework of what an educating city should be.

## Organising the International Congress of Educating Cities

**Antònia Hernández Balada**, the director of the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities

Adopting the slogan *An educating city is an inclusive city*, the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities (Barcelona, 13-16 November 2014) stressed how the capacity to promote wellbeing and social opportunities (Inclusion) is crucial in building spaces for coexistence, dialogue and relations (Participation) that strengthen the capacity to innovate and create (Creativity). It is essential for all our citizens to be committed to these three key elements if we are to strengthen the educational work of our cities and be at the forefront of capitals promoting wellbeing, coexistence and innovation.

With "commitment" as its byword, the Congress had some strong allies who were key in giving it direction. First, the Organising Committee, led by the Councillor for Presidency and Territory, Mr Jordi Martí i Galbis, which opened the way for all the City Council areas to add their perspective to the Congress. The crosscutting, interdisciplinary work by several bodies - such as the Education Consortium and the areas for Presidency and Internal Affairs; Safety, Security and Mobility; Economy, Enterprise and Employment; Urban Habitat; Quality of Life, Equality and Sport; and Culture, Knowledge, Creativity and Innovation - was essential for daily sharing the notion of an educating city that we wanted to show the world. The presence on the Committee of the Secretariat-General of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) – whose headquarters are in Barcelona – proved extremely helpful, allowing us to create a link between the city and the IAEC, framing the event under the congress model that the Association promotes.

The organisational structure of the Congress was complemented by the input of the Scientific Committee. Important figures, acting in collaboration with several universities, played a fundamental role in establishing the content and main themes of the Congress. The Scientific Committee was responsible for proposing a range of experts who spoke at its plenary sessions, selecting the experiences presented by participating cities and arranging the other sessions. Its scientific rigour was crucial for offering a quality congress with a sound scientific basis.

This publication is not a report on the Congress. Nor does it aim to appraise it. The purpose of *The Transforming Power of Educating Cities* is to show how the Congress was conceptually developed and what the creative impetus was - reflected in the inclusion of key figures from academic and professional worlds, their commitment and their participation in the Scientific Committee - for turning the Congress into a space for reflection and action on the future of educating cities. A future that, in one way or another, needs to take its inspiration from the vision offered us by the joint congress directors, Dr Àngel Castiñeira and Dr Miquel Martínez, just before the presentation of the declaration approved at the Congress, the commitment and the road map for educating cities.

Before turning to the articles and the declaration, it would be useful to run through the Congress figures to get a true picture of its impact:

<b>Attendance</b>	
Total number of attendees	1029
Total number of countries represented	34
Total number of cities represented	189

<b>% attendees by country</b>	
Spain	62%
Portugal	10%
South Korea	5%
Brazil	4%
Mexico	3%
Argentina	2%
Philippines	2%
France	2%
Italy	2%
Bulgaria	1%
Colombia	1%
Denmark	1%
Sweden	1%
Other	4%

<b>Experiences presented at the Congress</b>	
Experience workshops	91
Speakers' corner events	49
Cities that presented experiences	105
Countries that presented experiences	17





### 3. THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF EDUCATING CITIES

Reflections from members of the Congress' Scientific Committee:

#### **Contribution to educating cities**

I was brought up in Barceloneta. When I was a young boy, especially in summer, when the Born was practically a vegetable market, I often went there to see what was going on, the everyday hustle and bustle. School then virtually finished at the beginning of June and we did not go back until well into October. So I can say the educating city for me were the streets in Barceloneta, life in Barceloneta and the nearby neighbourhoods, and the relationships with the people.

You can easily come up with a philosophical definition of inclusion and exclusion. I think you will understand me better if, aside from school, we say that we can see inclusive policies being implemented in many areas. For example, in urban planning: how we design the neighbourhoods, how we design the way people are grouped together in a city. Or, needless to say, in the economic sphere, in opportunities for creating wealth and distributing it. We should not have smart, innovative cities with pockets of exclusion. The economic crisis, from a business and working point of view, can create exclusion. From a housing point of view, and a social care and health point of view too. There is a chance that some people will be excluded from what could be an important healthcare service linked to the policies of the welfare state. From a cultural or sports viewpoint as well. Or from a civic-association viewpoint. Which people we can integrate, incorporate, accommodate in those spaces that, through the association network, in our own way, we organise in the form of clubs, cultural organisations, foundations, associations, civic centres, parishes, etc.

For me, the way to detect inclusion or exclusion does not start with academia, but with the life each one of us has spent on the streets. Therefore, part of what I am is also thanks to some years when we did not have our own institutions or democratic freedoms, to ordinary people who also welcomed me.

I believe that if there are smart cities and creative cities, it is not because there are smart infrastructures linked to information and communication technologies but because there are smart citizens. The question is how do we make smart, creative citizens? I think we have two ways. One is to adopt a Neymar-style signing policy, that is, we look for talent, we look round the world. And what we do then is try to get them to come to Barcelona and be with us. But what we cannot do, even though Barcelona is a very important pole of attraction for talent, is just select Neymars. So I think, like the good Barça has done, what we have to do is adopt a training policy. And in putting the emphasis on smart citizens, there is a link, as I see it, with the role of educating cities, with the triple axis of inclusion, participation and innovation. In other words, the basic axis of this ethical capital committed to inclusion, not just material, economic or labour but in all aspects. The commitment to the participation axis too. We citizens do not want to be isolated from important or representative events in our cities and, needless



to say, our country. We would not be able to understand big urban events being held from a hierarchical perspective, from above. We have to hold them with the participation of the people. And the third idea is related to innovation. Sometimes it seems that creativity and innovation should only refer to the Biomedical Park in Poble Nou or the Olympic Port. I believe you can innovate, you can create, in a city allotment or managing refuse collection. In other words, there is no direct relation between creativity and innovation and talent simply in the university sense, with degrees and doctorates. The mistake that has been made in many cities is to break the link between inclusion and innovation, as if they were separate departments, so to speak; or citizen participation and creativity; the drive of civil society and urban development; environmental sustainability and wealth generation. I believe the trick is to say “no, what generates creativity is inclusion”, while the best inclusion policies also put the emphasis on talent and creativity.

So, what we are saying is we will not be able to have smart cities with enormous pockets of excluded citizens. We have to approach it from the opposite direction. Opting for human capital, opting for social capital ultimately means opting for creative capital. Creative cities, the creative or knowledge class, are linked to inclusive forms of coexistence which, to use my example, based on everyday life on the streets of a neighbourhood such as Barceloneta, has not caused exclusion, rather the opposite.

### **Nine final points**

1. We must be aware we are all education players. Without that awareness, properly understood dialogues and horizontal alliances are not possible.
2. If Josep Pallach is right about politics being education, it is redundant to talk of educating cities, because if we have a civic commitment, all cities are educating. In other words, there is this civic dimension in the very notion of *civitas*, an element I think it is important for us to reclaim.
3. Educating cities are spaces, physical and mental, and times as well, with different cadences, rhythms and beats. We can imagine these spaces and times, and we can even make suitable measurements of them.
4. No one knows everything, but we can know more and do more together. That means we are not only able to act as a laboratory but that we also have to be “collaborative”. In other words, collaborative laboratories that let us, by educating cities, learn continually from very different ways and spaces.
5. We can create quality, exemplary environments or micro-environments, face-to-face and virtual ones too. In other words, these micro-environments, from the neighbourhood, from the place where we live together, can really design, as has been said, not one city but many spaces in the city.
6. Educating cities are cities that transfer emotions, knowledge, talent, services, learning, with a view to continuing, with inclusion.

7. We cannot work for the common good without a sense of community and belonging. So working on this idea of belonging is a *sine qua non*.
8. We must work on non-patronizing inclusion and we must foster educating cities that produce free citizens.
9. Educating cities must promote what is public. That is to say, what is public is not just what is political, it is much more, it includes the whole dimension of what we call public.

**Àngel Castiñeira**

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### **An educating city and school.**

It has been said that smart cities are made by smart people. Educating cities are made by people who believe in education and in its power to change, as a factor for progress and the creation of personal and collective wealth. People who understand education as the responsibility not just of schools and their professionals but also as something shared by the various formal and informal educational players who accompany us in our lifelong learning process.

An educating city is one that values and promotes excellent schools and one that is convinced however good schools may be, they cannot do everything on their own, not by a long way. Families, “after school” – educational activities after school has finished – education beyond basic schooling, vocational training and university education, adult education, sports and cultural players, looking after the elderly and the effects of public policies in cities, also play a part in lifelong education. Taken together these are the key elements in the educating power of cities. Being an educating city is therefore a responsibility that falls to all of us and not just to schools alone. A school that aims to deliver quality education, that is open to and proactive in forming alliances with other players in the city, is a positive catalyst for achieving educational goals relating to the social, democratic and economic progress of a city and the people who live in it. These goals – which schools certainly cannot achieve on their own – would probably be very hard to reach without the collaboration of good schools. A city that aims to be an educating city with residents who are freer and enjoy greater equality needs an active, collaborative and creative citizenry. That is why it also needs schools to provide better learning, to be inclusive, to strive for excellence and fairness at the same time, to be enthusiastic over joint projects geared towards the common good and to act as a space for personal growth for independence, dialogue and participation, where pupils learn to value and appreciate democratic values.

We need inclusive schools that are inclusive because their practices – ways of doing things, relating, learning and living together – are inclusive, bring different children, young people and families together and work for equality and quality learning for each and every one of their pupils. Schools that neither separate nor leave behind any pupils. An inclusion that also implies opening one's mind, and an open attitude towards

the desire to know more about others and the desire to put ourselves in others' shoes and realising that others are those who make sense to themselves. Schools that train us to do better, schools that in some way enable us to realise effort and personal advancement also help us to advance and improve.

We need schools that contribute towards educational success within a city's social and educational policy framework, and which do that because those policies are territorial, local and understand education quality as something that unites the search for excellence in learning and the search for a more equitable city. Schools – public or private, but funded by public resources – in the framework of local, neighbourhood policies that involve all the territorial players in decision taking and promoting actions geared towards the city's educational success. Policies based on proximity and fairness that allocate resources well, not just to compulsory education services but also to pre-school services, outside-school services, and those aimed at increasing family participation in schools and the educational use of family time, while ensuring proper food and healthcare for young children and equal access to school.

We need schools that adopt a knowledge-economy society approach to education and learning that takes advantage of the city's resources and cities committed to going into schools to enable them to be a real laboratory for the creation and production of knowledge, art, expression and participation. Schools that are moving towards in-depth learning models that allow knowledge creation, that rely on everything the city has to offer in their work: museums, document centres, science parks, universities, businesses, workshops, the world of creation, the world of art. If schools tie in all around them as players – many of them are not always recognised as educational players but they carry great weight and have a freshness that are not part of school – they grow and do their work better, shed new light and develop another way of being a school that gives them a much stronger life, and much more pedagogically and strategically.

We need schools that encourage participation in collective projects that allow our children and young people to enjoy rights, duties and feelings as citizens, to learn to respect regulations and change them too, and appreciate their value as a guarantee of mutual trust. Schools that educate more active and collaborative citizens for a democracy that is not just representative but participatory as well. Schools where there is genuine participation, which really helps to stimulate people's enthusiasm, used as a platform for getting them to take part in changing things and in transforming and improving. To sum up, schools that are very conscious that learning to appreciate, participate, demand rights, carry out duties and teach democratic values means educating in values to create an active, democratic citizenry. Schools and cities that are not immune to participation, offering spaces where we can learn to take part without participation serving no purpose.

This way, schools – though not on their own – can contribute, and do contribute a lot, as a driver of change and progress in the framework of an educating city.

**Miquel Martínez**

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## The relation between learning and society

The immediate environment we develop in plays a decisive role throughout our lives, whatever our age.

Examples of actions from citizens who have benefited from the inter-generational relationships, from services that are coordinated with others to create multidisciplinary action networks... there are lots of established and creative examples, confined to specific contexts that could be generalised. From coordination at a high institutional level to experiences aimed at involving members of a community in joint, shared projects, where everyone that takes part learns something, most of all, the possibility of being able to solve a specific problem collectively and on the basis of consensus.

I was asked to prepare an example on this issue for the opening ceremony of the International Congress of Educating Cities in Barcelona: *What is a service-learning activity? What is its power to change? Is it a good example of networking and promoting creativity, participation and inclusion?*

I based it on my experience as a university lecturer who has played an active role in an SL activity involving 4th-year Master's students specialising in early-childhood education, their university tutor and the school community they did their fourth-year teaching practice in.

If we define *service-learning as an educational project with a social purpose*, our starting idea is the *transfer of knowledge* from the university to society, involving both the lecturers and the students, through their own learning process.

That proves the initial definition right, which assumes there must be learning if we are to be able to speak about this real educational project.

It is an undertaking between those doing the learning – university students – and the needs of the social collective it is confined to.

All the players involved must be able to detect this “need for improvement” to be able to define it, set the time for achieving it and look for the human and material resources required to bring it about.

This is vital, from my point of view, and I will give you an example from my own experience to illustrate what I am saying: how important it was for a school located in a specific neighbourhood of a city to have a new play area and the problems involved in solving that. This was noticed by some student teachers and the infant teachers at the school. They analysed the problem, involved the school management and the families, and together they came up with the solution, looking for the material resources to refurbish the play area in a limited period of time (a month and a half).

What do I mean by that? When the activity was over, everyone had the feeling they had learned something, and they also felt they had done a service. The student teachers and the university lecturer, the person who took the measurements for the equipment required, the children, the teachers and the families that had taken part, each one according to their skills and within their possibilities, had made the project a reality.

The excitement felt by all the “authors”, once the refurbishment of the play area had been finished, was contagious. Everyone felt the project was theirs and, most importantly, the play area had changed for the better, so it could offer its little users better opportunities.

What I have described is just an example of working as a “community”. There are many cases like this one, and very successful too. The idea is neither new nor is it unique or exclusive. Perhaps the most important fact is that for about 15 years it has linked the university community, in its own process of teaching and learning, to a necessary citizen project for a specific collective.

And in this specific case I would beg for caution, as this is currently seen as an innovative formula and quite common in many contexts. I think we need to be very precise about the goals of the real education project, which is not intended to take the place of the authorities in solving issues that fall under their competence. Nor do I think this transfer learned by the students should remain a mere learning topic on the curriculum.

I would like this example to take root and not just remain confined to the school environment... but rather, to reach everyone's social reality, where projects could be developed that produce learning based on collaboration, cooperation and solidarity between all those who wish to be involved in providing a service while learning.

**Montserrat Anton Rosera**

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### **Educating cities: the challenge and progress in Latin America**

There are currently 175 cities in the world with over a million inhabitants. The 13 most populated are in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Latin America is also one of the most urban regions on the planet: seven out of ten people live in cities. It is also one of the most unequal: around 205 million people live in poverty and nearly 79 million do not have the resources to adequately meet their food needs.

In Latin America, intraregional migration takes place from rural areas to the big cities offering the most jobs and services. Escaping poverty, wars, natural disasters and unhealthy conditions, migrants settle on the edge of urban areas, increasing the conditions of poverty, which are made worse by their being uprooted from their communities of origin. The processes of social and spatial segregation in cities is the result of a set of factors to which, in the presence of migrant populations looking for better opportunities and working conditions, can be added the scarce regulation of the land market, the constant swings in public policies, which oscillate between a strong, direct interventionism in the neighbourhoods and a lack of basic service provision, and the appearance of enclosed housing developments resulting from the search for security and wellbeing far-removed from city centres. This means that cities which have achieved a certain lifestyle for the traditionally well-off populace are now faced, systematically and urgently, with the problem of including a new population.

School education, especially basic levels geared towards children and adolescents, is a service that requires territorial distribution for it to take place but now the demographic dynamics of cities are creating unanticipated scenarios that need to be planned for. Consequently, the authorities are facing difficulties in developing the necessary school infrastructure in time to ensure the right intake and, basically, adequate conditions for schooling.

The contemporary situation of Latin American cities poses new demands in relation to the inclusion of those excluded from other rights or who only partially enjoy them. For that reason the philosophy and approaches of educating cities are still a necessity after 25 years.

If we take a look at the various projects and policies implemented by councils and social organisations within the educating city framework in recent years, we could make some generalisations and, on the basis of their results, venture to suggest it is necessary to carry on with them:

1. Local politics and projects implemented by municipal governments, institutions, organisations and social groups in the context of big Latin American cities.
2. Co-participation, co-responsibility and commitment from groups, institutions and individuals interested in education as a path to social inclusion and citizen participation in the urban sphere. The urban field is a complex environment where the contributions of various sectors are required for a coherent approach and a horizontal, creative dialogue between different perspectives that encourages critical, multidisciplinary approaches which overcome fragmentation and a one-directional approach.
3. Spaces for meeting and cooperating with the educational authorities of the big regional cities, to analyse the local State position on educational matters, to study the position of education in urban politics and push for city resources to be geared towards inclusive educational practices. That means education systems, normally the main players in these projects, need to promote exogamy urgently, so approaches do not get trapped in a kind of "schooling", which does not help the call for a real dialogue of views on the problems.

But there is still a lot to do to make the authorities in the big cities see education as a tool for overcoming or easing urban segmentation and make use of the resources cities have to give vulnerable populations their rights back. It is not a question of the deficit there might be in local policies, rather one of possibilities hardly explored until now, which an idea like educating cities has helped and can continue to help highlight, an important network of caring cities working towards the inclusion of all citizens, while focusing more on the most vulnerable sectors.

**Cristina Armendano**

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## **Educating city and school: some thoughts**

There is a general consensus, which society has really taken on board, that the educational work of schools can be reinforced through a favourable family environment but held back, even undermined, where the family environment is not right.

This general consensus that the family has an essential role to play in the education of new generations needs to be extended, in analogous fashion, to the role the citizen environment – the city – plays in the success or failure of education. Just like families, cities have a vital role to play in education: they can enhance it greatly but, at the same time, where serious flaws are found, they can have as much of a negative effect as an unfavourable family environment.

This Congress ought to encourage some self-reflection and help us to realise cities have an essential and decisive role to play in education that is directly comparable to what the family environment might have. Even so, we must avoid falling into the “urbanity” trap which, as its very name suggests, gives little thought to or indeed forgets about rural communities. The environment of a child brought up in a rural community has the same influence on that child, positive or negative, that a city environment might have. So when we speak of an educating city, we must understand the word “city” in its broadest sense, making room for any citizen environment the pupil might be in, irrespective of the number of inhabitants the locality has.

What would we say about a family that allowed some of its children to receive a good school education but deprived others the right to go to school, or rather, the right to an education? Living in a city that prevented some of its young population from having access to a good education would be just as “miseducating” as what happened in that family.

The touchstone for understanding whether the city we live in is an educating one must involve the analogy with the family and asking ourselves whether or not we would allow what we see in the citizen environment in the heart of that family.

If we take the analogy further, we will be able to pick out a long list of things a city needs to foster school and family education and, at the same time, a whole number of situations we can see on the streets that need to be avoided as they are profoundly miseducating.

As there are many examples, I will limit myself to saying that for the work of schools not to be cancelled out or undermined by the pupil's environment, the city needs a high level of civic behaviour, democracy, responsible freedom, participation, solidarity, respect for the most vulnerable – the sick, people with disabilities, the elderly and children – sufficient social services, security services that are both efficient and respectful towards human rights, and to offer young people educational, cultural, sports and leisure opportunities that are available to all.

Finally, an obvious point that cannot be avoided and which it is not superfluous to point it out: the role of a city as an educator – or miseducator, unfortunately, in some cases – will increasingly have the veneer of another child environment: the worldwide web. In the past, children went outside to play and saw what they saw on the streets. Now a



sign has been put up on the streets where they used to play which says “no ball games”, so the children, encouraged by their parents who want them to avoid the “dangers” of going out, stay inside. But they dive into another street and another square that is much bigger: the internet.

There are lots of diverse initiatives we will be able to hear about and study. They should all help to innovate and reinforce the work of all of us involved in the challenge of turning the city into a constructive environment in the education of our citizens.

**Josefina Cambra**

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### **Local politics, civic education**

The sorely missed Catalan politician Josep Pallach, who was also both a school teacher and an educationalist, wrote “politics is education”. And in truth, democracy, good democratic politics, as well as being a form of government, is also a way of educating people in citizenship. I am talking about politics that goes beyond what is, strictly speaking, administration, about politics in the sense of the driving force of city life, responsible for properly organising coexistence in the city. In the same vein, for good or bad, urban disorganisation can also educate badly. To put it bluntly, cities have an essential responsibility towards both general and civic education.

So politics is education, then so it should be run not just from the management perspective of authority but also from an educational vocation in particular. And just how are such civic commitment and active citizenship created through politics? This way: through a good organisation of the city, in the broadest sense of the term. Through an inclusive policy, for example, that not only incorporates the excluded but also educates through inclusion. This year, in Catalonia, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Paco Candel's magnificent book *Els altres catalans* [The Other Catalans], an essay that reflected on the situation and perspectives of the migratory flows which doubled the country's population during the 1950s and 1960s. And this book helps us to show how, in only 50 years, Barcelona and the other Catalan cities have managed not only to eliminate thousands and thousands of shanties but also to profoundly change the living conditions of the former residents and their descendants. Here, where nearly all of us are the children or grandchildren of the migrants who came over here under dreadful conditions, we must recognise – and welcome – the educating and transforming role Barcelona has played, along with all the other cities that were in similar situations. Because it is thanks to this transformation that we have learned a great inclusive lesson that is now part and parcel of our everyday outlook.

Today we clearly face new challenges in cities, those basic units of coexistence and direct experience of the quality of citizenship. Challenges I am convinced we will continue to meet thanks to the education we receive. It is interesting to see how the cities that have had and still have this inclusive, integrating capacity that can present it as one of their own assets, with a history of success, are the ones that are in the best conditions for facing up to successive challenges. What I mean is the virtue – the strength – of inclusive politics is not confined to the question of improving the material

conditions of life or the “material” inclusion, let us say, that is important, but the fact that a process is being started in parallel that is building a civic commitment from the entire population. Citizenship, the condition of being a citizen, is guaranteed by also working on development and the capacity to reconstruct a collective ego, which requires remembering the past and having a project for the future. The social cohesion we are so proud of as Catalans, as we know we live in a society subjected to major demographic upheavals, is the result of the educational contribution – profoundly educational contribution – cities have made to the country as a whole through their social, cultural and civic policies.

But what are the new challenges facing us? In our country, we are faced with the serious problem of “disorganised working hours”, which accentuates inequality, harms educational opportunities in a discriminatory way, undermines our health and, in general, reduces our possibilities of being a prosperous country. An educating city, in that sense, should be capable of contributing towards another way of organising working hours in line with this general education goal: less inequality and greater equality in access to the opportunities offered by public services, more rewarding and participatory lifestyles, among so many other things. Here we do have an issue that needs to be addressed and I hope in the coming period we are capable of thinking about that and acting accordingly. And, as in the case of hours, we are also faced with the need to develop better public transport, which is also a school for civic behaviour. In short, what I want is not to educate people with appeals to great principles and values, with propaganda and calls for awareness-raising, but with good organisation at the service of citizens. It is good organisation that educates, and not education that organises well. In my view, this is the responsibility of politics in a city that aspires to be an educating city.

I have talked about hours and mobility. But the list is endless: having a good library network; ensuring a good level of public safety; developing a model of urban planning that pacifies the way we relate in public, are some of the many features of this profoundly educational role and which ensure democratic participation. Participation that should not be ultimately viewed separated from the routines of everyday life. Participation cannot be reduced to a form of volunteering at set times, it should be seen as a way of becoming fully involved in the life of the city. Because participation means just that: going to the theatre, using public transport, going for a walk in public parks, keeping the city clean, not disturbing our neighbours, helping others, taking part in elections, being well-informed, knowing the city's history and, above all, intervening in the construction of its future.

**Salvador Cardús i Ros**

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## Living in a city of cities

I always like to think of a city as an established and yet evolving, advancing and living project. It is like a good wine, which gradually evolves and acquires different nuances as time passes, where the end result and what it is like always depend on the inter-relationship between various factors and circumstances. We have a long history behind us, we have been around for over 4,000 years, and cities, as a concept based on their complexity, are always the sum total and fusion of the different realities that shape and intervene in them.

I believe and live in a “city of cities”, of diverse, antagonistic and complementary community micro-environments (family, street, group, square, association, school, temple, neighbourhood, district, etc.) like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle of the realities and diversities in the metropolis. We humans grow up and develop in social groups that enable us to know who we are and recognise ourselves in relation to others; they are real springboards that make us grow as people and shape our reality, identity, feelings, language and so on.

A city must be able to take care of this internal diversity and richness, facilitate the inclusion of each and every one of its members and groups, so they can live and play an active part in the social life and reality around them, being and feeling themselves to be the real protagonists of the social structure they belong to: active, committed citizens.

This inclusive feeling is not just the responsibility of the local authority and its services but also of the education players that the city and the community have and create.

In an educating city the role of the third sector, of social volunteers and associations is key: we create and offer services, we offer support, provide spaces for relations and communications between members of the community, foster personal autonomy, generate social links, become schools of citizenship and are actively responsible for the informal, inclusive education in society.

Those of us in these groups, professional and voluntary, bring the dynamics to everyday life that are necessary for the development of social life, helping to achieve a balance between diversity and identity. We represent the citizenry as part of it. As citizens, and being close to them, we know the situation, we have first-hand information, which enables us to become laboratories of social innovation and give rapid, flexible and suitable responses to society's real needs. In many cases we speak for sectors of the population who have no access to information or services, either because they are unaware of them or have no direct access.

So we have an ideological commitment to be the voice of those who have no voice, to make their concerns heard and tackle the problems of the weakest members of our society.

We must be able to promote civic commitment, practise democracy and channel people's desires for the community through solidarity, creating social opinion in different collectives, conveying values and fostering a more egalitarian society within its diversity.

We must do that together by networking, creating a social fabric and, above all, by making the most of our efforts. And do it with the local authority, which we need to turn to and demand investment in the human capital of our citizens.

Therefore we need to start with the idea that educating means transforming. We have to be enthusiastic about the work we are doing, reinvent ourselves every day, really believe in the innovative capacity and the capacity for change that citizens have within themselves. And this, the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities is a good opportunity for continuing to learn from each other and continuing to be enthusiastic about the future which, although it is complex, is full of opportunities.

Because Barcelona is like a whole that ought to be capable of bringing its micro-environments, the many Barcelonas within it, together, of giving support to and making its own the many projects that come out of its social bases, so that together we stay a truly inclusive, participatory, committed, innovative and creative society: a reality formed by many diverse micro-realities, as diverse as the city that embraces them.

**Josep Maria Font i Font**

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### **Educating cities: cities with a heart**

*"Ideals are real. Even if we don't attain them, they direct our search. So, what is our ideal of the good citizen? Do we imagine a good citizen as an impeccably right-acting sort of body snatcher, or as someone who simply has love?"* Martha C. Nussbaum

Educating cities? Human cities, close to the people who live in them, eager to build common spaces, to forge the bonds of relationships and love. Cities where everyone has access to basic, universal rights. Brotherly cities, with freely shared spaces that enable everyone to develop their abilities. Cities where music, poetry and art forge feelings of community and shared belonging. Where what is common is valued.

Cities with heart, transformers, where there is room for reciprocity and vulnerability, fighting to restore human dignity where it has been undervalued. Cities which are open to diversity, that educate people throughout their lives and which foster a critical spirit. Cities that look to improve, where social problems have the faces and names of real people. Cities where school has a central role in learning and building citizenship. Cities with schools that open their doors to the neighbourhoods, workshops, companies, museums, universities. Cities where the cultural, social and economic players are also education players.

Utopian cities, where ideals are real and guide politics, institutions, aspirations and plans. Cities where justice, democracy, equality, freedom and fraternity foster action and decision taking. Creative, imaginative cities where people want to do things better. Cities with leaders who dream, who advance towards new conquests, who fight for and encourage everyone to take part in making the dream a feasible reality. Democratic cities with inclusion, participation, creativity, civic commitment laboratories, where

politics have ceased to be the hostage of certain institutions. Smart and inclusive cities because their citizens are smart and creative.

Educating cities, why do we call them that? Because education is always a project, a horizon, a future, a hope. An educating city is a city that opens up horizons of possibility and opportunities for all those who live in them. And the proximity of the city and the neighbourhood, where needs and problems can be grasped, means that is where the right to education can become a reality. It is in the neighbourhood where a real fusion of formal and informal education takes place. Neighbourhoods and cities are where people make the educational transitions from childhood to adulthood. From the perspective of lifelong learning, cities have an increasingly important role to play. The educational potential of this territory makes it possible to develop talents and abilities, as well as the feelings of belonging and community that are the basis of citizenship.

But we know that, today, there are many people amid the hustle and bustle of our cities who do not have the minimum needed to live. New expressions of social invalidation arise: surplus lives, the homeless, the unneeded. It is more and more difficult for young people to build a life project and remain the central figure in their life story. There are new and old realities of poverty and exclusion that lead us away from the ideal of an educating city. That is why today, more than ever, we must reassert the educational dimension of cities. Which is nothing other than welcoming, including and making all their citizens participate in a common project. The mission of constructing ourselves. That is why the theme of “13th International Congress of Educating Cities” taking place in Barcelona in November 2014 is “An educating city is an inclusive city”. A theme that rests on three pillars: inclusion, participation and creativity. Because inclusion cannot be understood without the participation of everyone and the creative imagination needed to make it possible. An idea that goes against the grain of our times. Against the grain of the frequent images of the liquid society. Against the grain of decisions that persist in shrinking public authorities, particularly those closest to ordinary citizens and drastically reducing expenditure on education, the health service and social services. Against the grain of the frays appearing in the social and association fabric, in a process that poses the risk of social breakdown and atomisation. This is the context in which we pose the challenge of uniting people around the world who are moved by the ideal and the utopia of continuing to make the educating city a reality.

Because if there is a form of violence that is specific to our day, it is the lack of a horizon: “things are the way they are and can't be any other” is the oft-repeated refrain. Nothing could be further from the educating perspective that believes in a better future and wants to make it possible. One of the most obvious problems of our time is the ethos of defeat. A defeat that precedes the facts, that is accepted before struggling for the ideal. The ethos of defeat destroys any utopian dream and undermines the foundations of hope. Demanding, working for and building educating cities is a kind of hoped for utopia. A utopia that is being turned into reality – as we will see in the course of the Congress – in some of the most hidden corners of the planet. And which translates into projects and real experiences developed by citizens committed to solidarity, justice, liberty and equality. Citizens that believe in and fight for an integrating city, where everyone might have a place and a mission to accomplish, for a human city that generates humanity. Let our cities be educating cities that look to the future, what might be, with confidence. Let them integrate human frailties and

excellence. Cities with a heart because love, laughter, sympathy, tears and emotions beat there.

**Anna Jolouch**

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### **Educating in the knowledge society**

We are living in a period marked by the unstoppable development of new communication technologies. Their widespread application at all levels of productive activity has contributed dramatically to economic and cultural globalisation and is a factor in the unprecedented acceleration of time. The constant accumulation of new knowledge and the possibility of instant communication between emitters and receivers across the planet mean we are immersed in a state of permanent change, which creates lots of problems in adapting. The world is increasingly interdependent and more complex. Understanding what is happening is not easy. Therefore we need to continually extend the period of education and expand the possibilities for lifelong learning. The big challenge educating cities face is providing an environment that allows their citizens to acquire the necessary conceptual tools for understanding and acting in an ever more accelerated and complex world.

If knowledge has been an essential element in individual and collective progress in all societies, in ours, which is precisely the so-called "knowledge society", it has become the big key for opening the door to social inclusion. Without knowledge, the possibilities of adapting are reduced and the risk of being relegated to the social sidelines is very high. In the most developed societies, social inclusion and exclusion are measured in terms of access to knowledge. This access is determined first and foremost by the effectiveness of conventional education systems, but there are other socialisation factors that act on the environment too. The most important is the system of information and communication, which in turn is subjected to very profound changes in production models, as well as in use and consumption habits.

Information has become an essential element. But possessing information does not guarantee access to knowledge. It is a necessary condition but it is not sufficient. It is not exactly information we have a shortage of in Western societies, but even so, we cannot say we are always well informed. On the contrary, the avalanche of communication we are subject to might give the impression we know everything we need to know but that is very often not the case. Good information does not always appear in the first place, nor does it always reach us first, and even less so if we are talking about information we have received without having researched.

Interacting in this complex situation requires having accurate data at our disposal that is adapted to realities. Data that is crucial if we are to be able to make the right decisions. It also requires having the necessary cultural elements for interpreting this data correctly, having the keys to the context of the problem we have to clarify. As the American philosopher Harry G. Frankfurt says, "Civilizations have never gotten along healthily, and cannot get along healthily, without large quantities of reliable factual



information" on the events that surround or concern us. Quality democratic deliberations require well-informed citizens.

The problem lies precisely in how to guarantee access to reliable information. The internet and new communication tools help to democratise knowledge and a degree of transparency that should make it easier to weed out erroneous or misleading information. But technologies by themselves do not guarantee this. First of all their open nature and horizontal structure implies a break with the hierarchical mechanisms of the vertical structure that, until not long ago, dominated knowledge-socialisation processes. The notion of "authority", in the etymological sense of *auctoritas*, becomes blurred in the open system of the internet. The construction of references can go down the wrong path and the influence is not always based on quality.

Precisely because information is so fundamental in individual behaviour and in collective decision-making, it is the object of distortion and manipulation, which makes access to knowledge more difficult. It is not difficult to find examples. One way of counteracting certain truths that are uncomfortable, or might affect established interests, is to spread biased information. Another way to neutralise is to divert attention away from a real conflict with false controversies or just create a lot of noise and confusion.

In theory, new technologies allow easy access to the most important data and the most reliable sources. Everyone has access to the studies published by the most prestigious scientific magazines and the statistics that best reflect the real situation. The internet is full of reliable sources with quality information that can be accessed by anyone. But to get to it, you need a high level of knowledge beforehand. This is the paradox. To have access to the most reliable data and resources, you first need to know they exist, where to find them and how to get hold of them. To make the most of the potential that new technologies offer us we need to learn a great deal and master the keys that govern communication mechanisms.

Education in the knowledge and information society requires equipping citizens with the tools that will allow them to know with certainty which sources are reliable and which are not, tools to defend against distortions and confusion, and the elements of a critical understanding of reality that will allow them to face up to the demands of an ever more accelerated and complex world.

**Milagros Pérez Oliva**

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### **Complexity and commitment: educating city**

An educating city must be built on the basis of coexistence, cohesion and committed citizens. But coexistence and cohesion would simply be carcasses or shells devoid of substance if they were not based on an inclusive spirit and inclusive practices. Every exclusion is a cut, the blow of an axe struck against coexistence and cohesion and, therefore, against the very spirit of an educating city.



We must not lose sight of the commitment to quality either, and not just a technocratic quality but an intellectually critical, sensitive one that is fully human and social as well, while also understanding equality and excellence, often invoked almost like a mantra, are two sides of the same coin that basically mean equal opportunities and compensating for inequalities, through social dialogue, sharing responsibility, supporting the weakest, with strong leadership but where participation is an indispensable element. Governing for everyone but, above all, with everyone, and a city strategy that is better the more it is shared. For that it is necessary to find spaces for dialogue and participation: networks, councils, committees, etc.

It is worth recalling that the democratic government of a city plays an indispensable role in the processes referred to, that it must demand more of itself, more responsibility and commitment to social values that can be summed up in two ideas: cohesion and inclusion in school and society, as simple as they are complex and difficult. All the Educating Cities' Charter can be read, essentially, as an effort to guarantee these principles through the spirit of the twenty articles as a whole, as well as some specific or express mentions, such as Article 16. Naturally, a local authority commitment to the Charter in many cases goes beyond the minimum legal requirements the authority must meet, without contradicting them, obviously. And here it is necessary to open up a path that has two parallel and hopefully interconnected lines: the inside track of coordination in practice and real interchange – the famous "cross-sectionality" – between councillors and council services, which requires strong leadership from the mayor's office; and the outside track of real participation, which crosses between council and citizens through the most diverse formulas possible, to be able to exploit, on the one hand, all the education potential in the authority itself and, on the other hand, all the city's potential so they merge into a single network of great civic and educational value.

An educating city is aware of the limits of schools in educating citizens and, in turn, the commitment to increasing the involvement of those "outside school" to education (the city's social, cultural, economic and political players). But the question that needs to be answered is what the educational role these new players must play is. If organisations, companies, sports and cultural institutions, associations and unions become involved in improving the quality of education in cities, the question is how they should do that, how can they make their contribution and how can it be evaluated.

The usual way has been to develop "educational services", that is, set up activities with a school format: guided tours, workshops for schools, open days, in-company work experience, etc. The interest and quality of these activities improve the "school" function of the educational context – everything that is conveyed in a formal context – but they do not necessarily improve the educational quality of the environment. It might seem like a play on words, but an educating city does not simply mean that everyone plays the role of a school, rather it means that everyone does what they are supposed to do while thinking about the educational dimension. Being an educational city in relation to civil society should mean, at the very least, enabling these two contributions: offering educational services targeting schools and families in a more or less formal way but also finding a way for their own general activity to contribute to improving the educational quality of the context. But there is an imbalance in relation to this double function. Probably at no other time have there been so many formal educational

resources and offerings (education in leisure time, extracurricular education, activities at museums and cultural centres, sport for all, etc.,) while, on the other hand, there has never been so much concern about the educational quality of the contemporary context (the old and the new media, the social dynamics of the urban environment, the fragility of values in contemporary culture and so on). Turning to the classical subdivision in education, one might say that the increase in formal and non-formal education on offer is not capable of counteracting what was mainly offered by the social environment, in other words, informal education.

Given this, we will have to think in particular about how we can improve the informal aspects of education, in what way could the urban environment be more useful in educational terms, and, to do that, what and how the contribution of all the social, cultural and economic players in a city should be. The contribution of a company to an educating city can be measured by the amount of resources and energy spent in turning its activity into an educational service (guided tours, work experience for vocational training and university students, etc.) but also by its contribution to an environment that favours “educational climates”, such as working hours that make family relations easier or social responsibility experiences in the community. The complexity of the commitment cannot easily be resolved but the desire for a cohesive, inclusive, creative, educating city justifies all the efforts of all the parts that constitute it.

**Joan Manuel del Pozo**

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### **Casa Àsia's role at the International Congress of Educating Cities**

The reality of Asia, if we compare it to Europe, is very different. There are lots of factors. But one idea kept coming into my head. At present, 60% of the world's population is in the Asia-Pacific region, Asia properly speaking, because the Pacific is not exactly a heavily populated area, if we bear in mind the huge geographical area it takes up.

And during these reflections on what Asia's cities and the Asian world could bring, I had to find an answer, even though only pre-set ideas came to mind, such as when we talk of Asia from Europe, we always generalise a lot. Asia is very big: what we understand as Asia from Europe, with our mental division based on maps, has some very different realities. To start with, people we call “Asian” are not conscious of being Asian themselves. For them, there are different cultures. If you ask someone who is Japanese: “Are you Asian?” they will answer: “No, I'm Japanese.” If you ask an Indian, they will say: “No, I'm Indian”. A Filipino, etc., the same. So, to start with, not even they themselves have the concept we have of “Asia”, which is a Western concept, not an Asian one.

Secondly, the reality in the countries we call “Asian” is very different. Most cities are megacities. Of 20 megacities on a world scale, 11 are Asian. I was explaining how we compare cities of this magnitude with European cities, when the reality is very different

in all aspects. And not just by geographical criteria but by economic development criteria too. On top of that, in most Asian countries, there is a big contradiction. These are countries that, economically, are very advanced. For example, China. It is estimated that by 2020 it will probably have overtaken today's number one economic power: the United States. On the other hand, China also has some of the poorest cities in the world. The same is true of India, which is regarded as one of the great powers, yet there are some very large nuclei of poverty and not just cities. New Delhi, for example. How can we measure this fact on a European scale? How can we contrast it with Western reality, which is entirely different, as it is based on other social, economic and cultural parameters, even human rights and the classes that could demand them, if we analyse them in depth. Comparison, then, is almost impossible.

And there are many other things like that. Another very important fact as regards the contrast in values is that in Europe we have made a big step forward with the right to education, to give one example. That is not the case in Asia; only the most privileged classes have this right, which in most European countries is paid for by the State, at least until the end of compulsory education. Another fact, the compulsory nature of basic education, which in many Asian countries does not exist. It does happen, certainly. On the other hand, if we focus on countries such as Korea and Japan, the PISA reports show that since 2012 the best results have been achieved by young students in countries such as these, and others, in the Asian region. With logic, our logic, to hand, that hardly fits either. As regards the population in general, China and Japan are where a large part of the population is old and ageing rapidly. In countries such as Iran, on the other hand, 70% of the population is young. Bearing in mind that 60% of the world's population is in Asia, what all this generation can bring to sociological debates and studies is, simply, the dream of being able to play an active part in political movements, in society itself, so they do not to remain excluded from this society.

A very clear example of some of the social differences and privileges accepted in Asian societies as a cultural and ancestral fact is that of women in the India of castes. It is not true that if you are born into a caste you have no possibility of leaving it but it is certainly very difficult, given it is a very hermetic environment in that respect. It is also the case that Asian societies are demanding to be able to participate, to be able to be included. If we do an analytical exercise and read the press, TV, radio and internet news of these last few years, we realise the main demand of the populations of many Asian countries before the world's other societies is the power to participate, the power to be included, that is, not be excluded from what is going on in the everyday life of the global village. So the conclusion is that Asia's contribution to this Congress has been this contagion, this conveying of a dream to be an educating society and a participant in this movement. That is what has happened. And that is what we should be able to hear more of, both from the more developed societies such as Korea, China and India, for example, as well as those at the other extreme. So, as I said before and repeat now: Asia in general, and in the context we put it in, has the dream of being able to participate actively in political movements, in society itself, in order not to remain excluded from this society. And to finish, I will give an example that clearly illustrates what I mentioned about this demand linked to inclusion. Most of the engineers currently

working in America are from India, and this is a great example of the dream I am talking about.

**Montserrat Riba i Cunill**

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### **The role of schools and teachers in fostering talent and creativity in an educating city**

Schools do not act alone in a city with an educational vocation. They become yet another cog in a mesh of gears, in a network of educational co-responsibilities. Of course, it is a vital piece in this network that has an educational influence on future citizens over many years. That is why the role of schools and, above all, their teachers, establish one of the cornerstones in the educational project of a city, territory or country.

Schools must contribute towards making citizens not just cultured, critical, caring and responsible... but also sensitive, creative, active and independent. However, people can only demonstrate their creativity, initiative and imagination if they are flexible, not afraid of change or risk and able to handle uncertainties. And, above all, if they have strong self-esteem – in other words, confidence in themselves – in their possibilities. If schools accompany future citizens – from a very early age – while helping them to gradually build an independent life project based on self-awareness of their own talents and faculties, and supported by the confidence and esteem of their educator, the responsible, caring and creative citizen we want will become possible. Not just because of the role played by school but also because the educating work of the family and teachers will have been able to make the most of a facilitating framework, the educating city.

Formal, non-formal and lifelong education must prioritise the development of the potential talent in each and every one of their students. Everyone has a talent or a range of talent, which is why we need to encourage the development of the talent everyone shows. Schools must do that, of course, but with the help of the other institutions and organisations that, in an educating city, make up the infinite network of educational and creative possibilities. For that reason we need to keep ourselves far away from homogenising educational and learning conceptions. We need to abandon the school mania for everyone doing the same, at the same time and in the same way. If we want to foster talent and creativity, that model is totally out of date. We need schools and educational entities where each one can stand out for its own, imaginative educational project. Each educational offering must be capable of developing its own identity, based on one or several strong points, and then be as creative as possible in developing them. If we did that, we would have cities with an educating network of numerous projects, capable of responding to a wide variety of demands.

Without good teachers there are no good schools, and without good schools there are no educating cities. Primary and secondary teachers are the first education players in

an educating city because, with their work, they guarantee the future, the ethics, the democratic quality and the creative potential of their citizens.

Just like educational institutions, teachers must be able to shine through their diverse talents and capabilities, so they must be in charge of designing and running their school, curricular, organisational and educational projects. It must be possible to increase the independence of teachers, management and schools, as well as local autonomy and that of educational environments, to make individual, diverse city education projects possible.

To sum up, an educating city is one that exercises and offers freedom, in other words, shows confidence in its educators so they can exploit their talent and creativity.

**Enric Roca Casas**

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### **Creativity, social innovation and social-emotional development of citizenship**

Creativity and innovation constitute the two cross-cutting axes current international, national, (inter)regional and local politics revolve around. Official OECD and Council of Europe documents usually link both to the economic sphere and executive intelligence: solving problems through lateral thinking. Creativity and innovation, they say, are basic capabilities that need to be developed to drive countries' economic growth.

Without denying the value of creativity and innovation as catalysts for the new knowledge-based economy, in line with that and from an educational perspective included in the Educating Cities' Charter, creativity and innovation would also constitute essential elements in the all-round development of citizens.

From an educational perspective – and based on an ethical and political philosophy geared towards human development and social wellbeing – educating cities honour their educational commitment to their citizens when they make the city something more than a physical, territorial space, where their inhabitants develop and they try to satisfy their needs with facilities and resources. Besides all that, a city that educates, if we take one of the etymological meanings of the word, develops the capabilities of its citizens. And one of the dimensions of human development that can be developed is, undoubtedly, individual and collective creativity to serve social and personal wellbeing and social innovation.

Assimilating the logic and language of art is the key to gradually shaping educating cities in an environment of creativity and innovation that serves the social and personal development of their citizens.

Boosting citizens as actors and central players on a new stage, the city, which takes shape in the intersubjectivity and affectivity of those who live in it.

A city that fosters creative dynamics in its citizens fosters diversity in the widest sense (ethnic, linguistic, religious, etc.) popular culture, experimentation, exchange and dialogue in public spaces. That way it encourages synergies and new alliances between various agents and agencies (formal and non-formal) that are aimed at bringing about a creative altruism which is at the service of inclusion and social cohesion. A city that assumes its educational responsibility for creativity and innovation promotes spaces for meeting, communicating and relating that amplify the voices of their central characters: citizens.

**Clara Romero Pérez**

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### **Including the other to learn from the other**

Fairness is a fundamental ethical principle recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and all the constitutions of democratic countries.

The main mission of an educating city is to ensure education reaches all the people who live in it. That means educational institutions must be particularly sensitive to vulnerable groups, so that all citizens have the same opportunities for developing their skills and abilities. The challenge is to ensure quality education reaches everyone, because education is the main driving force that takes the social elevator up.

An educating city is an inclusive city that integrates others without "disintegrating them", that welcomes their talent so they can bring it to fruition and give the best of themselves in that society. It is a city that offers possibilities and triumphs over prejudices and stereotypes. But the challenge is not an easy one. It calls for imagination, especially in contexts of social and economic crises and an increase in social needs.

The link between inclusion and creativity is absolutely decisive. To ensure quality education for everyone, it is not enough to mimic past models. We need to revise the model and see what are the most efficient means and channels for reaching everyone. Public institutions must be particularly receptive to initiatives from civil society, especially from the tertiary sector, to find fair solutions for all citizens. We also need to take on board the experiences of other cities round the world that are pursuing the same end. The Congress of Educating Cities in Barcelona is a privileged occasion for this direct, open exchange of experiences that are very far apart geographically but which can inspire new, inclusive educational practices.

In this creative work it is essential to include the experience of universities, the research projects of innovators looking to get the most out of educational resources so they effectively reach the maximum number of people.

Including others but not dissolving them. That is, welcoming them to learn from them and so they can develop all the potential talent they embody. We need a change of



perspective. It is essential to see all the possibilities inherent in vulnerable groups, the possibilities that education is capable of bringing out and helping to flourish.

In contrast to a fatalistic approach, we need to adopt a constructive one that sees green shoots where others only see a devastated landscape. There are really rich experiences which, through music, theatre and sport, have made it possible to bring about cohesion between groups of people very far apart socially, economically and culturally. An educating city has to build spaces and times for intersection, where it is possible for education players, formal and non-formal from here and there, traditional and innovative entities, to meet and look for creative ways of overcoming the inertia of fatalistic thinking.

**Francesc Torralba**





#### 4. POWER IDEAS

##### **An Educating City is an inclusive city.**

##### **The city as an educating player**

The educating-city model we are proposing does not aim to put the resources offered by cities at the disposal of schools but rather to put the city itself at the disposal of education. Just as the key tool for education is life, so the key tool that enables the true function of cities as educators is the city itself, transformed into a positive life model. It is experience that provides the greater part of education. The opportunity we now have for present and future generations is to offer a decent, high-quality urban-life model based on awareness, consciousness and compassion.

We know, however, that there is no such ideal of the educating city exists; that is a utopia. If we are to build an educating city, we shall have to aim high, take on risks, imagine the impossible and make the ordinary into the extraordinary. We believe the contents of the Charter of Educating Cities may serve as inspiration for the many attempts to define this utopia, start building it and embody it in worthwhile common-life projects. Everything starts with a problematising and emancipatory approach that searches for contexts and opportunities to experience the city and cultivate the spirit of citizenship. Therefore, improving the city also means re-educating our approach and seeing an educating opportunity in on street and building.

In this collective task, it is advisable to assign a very significant role to the function carried out by public managers, because it is in their hands that the real possibility lies for transforming some of the citizens' discontent into well-being. It is in the daily policies of the cities that we can gradually introduce treatment for the citizens and care for individuals and their particular needs. As we do that we shall be succeeding in combining ethics with policy in our city.

##### **Ensuring a rights to the city and education for everyone**

It is inevitable that, in an ever-changing technical and economic setting, our cities must face highly porous dynamics of inclusion and exclusion which blur their boundaries. Despite policies for reducing poverty and increasing access to social, education or health services, many cities are also seeing a rise in inequalities at the same time or new forms of marginalisation.

If we are to make the right to the city a reality for everyone, one of the fundamental challenges we must face in future years is caring for the elderly, who will have to be looked after according to their needs, but by making the most of and stimulating the valuable contributions this group can make to the community.

Likewise, another important future challenge will be care during childhood and support for parents and their needs. In addition to policies that provide support in the form of food, health and others targeted at children and young people.

Cities will always need areas in which to meet, grow and live in harmony. We must ensure the rights to the city and education, as fair rights from top to bottom by working together in a co-ordination, strengthening diversity and encouraging co-operation.

Today, schools that are accessible to everyone are still a basic element to guarantee one of these privileged spaces for socialisation; because schools are able to assimilate diversity and allow everyone to work and thus share the same framework of education and coexistence.

### **Promoting true democratisation in access to information and consolidating creativity**

We also know that in recent years, a true transition to democracy has taken place in access to information and in this regard, cloud computing generated a world of real possibilities. On a technological level, "cloud computing" offers infinite computing, storage and information capacities. At the same time, mobile technology provides universal access; social media networks allow connectivity among people and the configuration of virtual communities based on their interests; and technological devices – the Internet of things – makes it possible to interpret and take action with respect to what is going on in cities in real time.

For this reason it is necessary to educate people to allow them to improve their use of technology while optimising their possibilities in accordance with their status and situation (motivation and education of young people at risk; isolated women who participate in entrepreneurship programmes; people with disabilities; protection and dissemination of minority languages, etc.) That is why we need to consolidate computer skills among all citizens, to enable them to obtain free access to relevant information and acquire knowledge. In addition, social innovation methods should be developed to allow people to discuss their problems, in multi-professional modes or through new forms of alliance.

In the 21st century, we are changing from an information society to a society of knowledge and innovation. As a result, we have a growing need to encourage creativity because we realise that creativity contributes to our development as people and as a community and is an endless source of wealth. This is an excellent opportunity to allow the mission of educating cities to be that of developing one of their finest virtues: the educational potential of their creative capacity.

Moreover, the creativity of which we speak is not targeted at an elite minority but must be worked on and developed day by day with all citizens. As has already occurred in other historic crossroads mankind has faced, and in such iconic places as Athens, Florence, Paris or Vienna, the city may become a privileged site where the thinking and reasoning of people are fostered and disseminated – inside and outside the school - as are science, arts, research and experimentation. Thus, the mechanisms of the cities themselves may be transformed, to promote dialogue, humanism, thinking, collective intelligence and creative freedom.

In fact, creative talent can be used in many cities and countries as the path to liberation. The communicative and experience-based power of the arts should be highlighted: art is a way to approach and emancipate citizens. It is necessary to invest in creativity, promote culture and acknowledge the function of art in fostering personal talent and as a mechanism of social cohesion and consequently, of communities and of cities; in addition to being a tool for eliminating personal or collective suffering or exclusion.

### **By creating quality citizenship through participation**

Inclusion and exclusion are plural and diverse but there is always a subjective sentiment in exclusion. The most widespread desire of most people is to have someone, to mean something to others and to feel part of a common project.

If the educating city itself is responsible for educating or not educating, we must consciously decide to make cities inclusive and participatory and allow this to be reflected not in words, but in actions, in urban planning, family, housing, childhood and other policies.

We must build citizenship by fostering participation in public areas, to allow the beneficiaries to become the main actors in their own lives. We must ensure that participating citizens are not just those who have “settled in” or have privileges because participating means “taking part” (actively) and not just “being a part” (passively). Everyone must take an active part in conditions of full equality since those who are excluded are now those without a voice, the invisible ones, the ones who are the farthest away from real participation. One key factor in this situation is the poor quality of the information reaching the excluded.

Equality is the basis of democracy and the principle of justice. Citizens must feel equal, close, concerned, to ensure we never remain indifferent to whatever happens to others. The city can help to generate the construction of something that is common for everyone; it can create forms of trust that will bring out all the potentialities in everyone. Societies must devote more effort to creating participative citizenship. Schools, too, have a relevant role as places for inclusion and for reinventing the world.

Those who govern educating cities must know how to generate trust based on setting an example; they must dream to be able to transform daily life; they must help education to include arts, democratic values and sentiments and the heart; and they must safeguard weaker citizens through specific policies.

Those who govern educating cities must also help transform exclusion, while also being able to support children and young people. Educating cities must generate non-segregating urban planning policies where there is no room for ghettos inhabited by the poor or the rich (where there are ghettos there is no city); they must perform quality-information management to prevent propaganda and to educate citizens in participation; they must create porous spaces for education and culture throughout the city; they must promote policies which care for citizens and support them with

consideration and respect to bring out the individual aspects of each one, and they should consider, above all, that human dignity must be preserved, and that everyone has the right to beauty, to enjoy well-designed homes, pleasant surroundings, attractive public buildings and visible elements with quality.

*Based on reports from the following members of the Science Committee: Clara Romero Pérez and Enric Roca Casas*

**Àngel Castiñeira**  
**Miquel Martínez**



## 5. PROPOSALS

### **The challenges of an Educating City.** Declaration from the 13th International Congress of Education Cities

#### **1. Introduction**

2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the creation of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC). During this time the IAEC has consolidated itself and has continued to grow, reaching more than 478 cities from more than 36 countries from all the continents.

During these years, the cities committed to the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities have met up regularly, every two years, to exchange experiences and knowledge so as to be able to tackle the important global challenges which are posed and that directly affect the lives of the citizens.

In times of crisis the concept of Educating Cities makes even more sense. Difficulties force us to be creative to foster attitudes of solidarity and to call upon citizens' involvement.

Under the heading **"An educating city is an inclusive city"**, the 13th International Congress of Educating Cities 2014 took place in Barcelona from 13th to 15th November, in which 838 participants from 189 cities and 34 countries.

The congress included 7 plenary sessions, 84 workshops and 49 *speakers' corners*. We have analysed and shared experiences and made proposals so as to make the cities of the world more educating and inclusive cities that satisfy the conditions for generating social welfare and the health of all those who inhabit them. Cities that promote attitudes of solidarity, respect and interest for the common good, among all the people who coexist in them.

This Congress promoted critical debate and has helped us to become aware of the fact that the educating city plays an essential and determining role in the integral promotion of inclusion, citizen participation, and its creative and innovative potential.

Within the full process of defining the new Post-2015 Urban Development Agenda, it is necessary to continue working so as to consolidate and broaden the achievements reached within both the local and international framework with the aim of fighting against social exclusion, boosting new firm and transversal responses. It is for this reason that the Educating Cities sign the present Declaration which develops some of the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities. This Declaration is based on some considerations to immediately adopt some commitments to foster social inclusion and finally to make a call at a national and international level.

#### **2. Considering that**

1. More than half the world's population resides in urban settings and it is foreseen that this trend will continue upwards. Furthermore, it is stated that cities are the setting in which the various crises that humanity faces nowadays are manifested in

- a more severe way; crises with repercussions throughout the world, whose effects highlight situations of discrimination and exclusion.
2. Exclusion has multiple dimensions: social, economic, political, cultural, relational, digital, generational, and of gender, and is expressed in various ways in the different countries of the world: poverty, unemployment or labour precariousness, the weakening of the community relations, and the fracturing of social ties, spatial segregation of the population, the lack of housing or precariousness in this respect, unequal access to health and to a healthy environment, unsuitability of the spaces and public services regarding people suffering from disabilities or reduced mobility, the lack of access to public transport, deficient provision of public services of quality, and the absence of policies of equal opportunities, etc.
  3. In the city, exclusion can be specifically found in some groups in a more notable way than in others, mainly due to gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religion, or in the most vulnerable groups of the population such as children or the elderly, the disabled or people in situation of social or economic disadvantage; but it is also increasingly affecting the unemployed and the middle classes, who are especially suffering the effects of a crisis that, in some regions of the world, could become structural.
  4. The contemporary city, when moved by the dictates of the market, ends up becoming a space of growing inequality and social exclusion. But the city can also be the best potential provider of social and democratic resources for promoting inclusion.
  5. The new information and communication technologies take on greater relevance in a globalised world, in which the cities are more interconnected than ever. The ICTs have affected the daily life of the people, modifying our reality; they are an important means of interaction and relation and of access to knowledge, but they can also be an instrument of control, harassment and a source of inequality. And that's why it's necessary to foster their potential and to fight against their bad use.
  6. Political action allows us to act on the causes of exclusion and to transform the social reality based on actions which include values such as equality, solidarity, respect for differences and the promotion of sustainable development, generating societies with greater cohesion and which are more democratic that guarantee the exercising of the basic human rights of the citizenship (civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights).
  7. The educating city boosts and generates policies of citizen participation, of work and collaboration between all the social and educational agents that make it up, it knows how to give democratic relevance to its actions and how to strengthen the civic action, social inclusion and economic wealth in its setting.
  8. It is worth highlighting the central role of the local public administrations of the tasks of implementing inclusive and transversal policies. Likewise, by joining the citizen initiative to the municipal effort, this allows all the resources of the city to be mobilised, creating collaboration networks, fostering an active citizenship and values of solidarity and commitment, all in all, gaining in efficiency when tackling social exclusion.
  9. An educational offer of quality, either in the formal or non-formal field, based on the principle of equal opportunities, is a key tool for fostering inclusion, with medium or long-term results. Within this framework, schools play a central role by being, at the same time, sources of knowledge and venues for the development of the necessary personal life skills, and active laboratories of social and cultural diversity, that allow the shaping of a responsible, critical and collaborative citizenship. A learning process that does not end in childhood and youth, but is extended throughout life.
  10. Unequal access to the cultural offer and leisure activities are a source of educational and social inequalities. There is a notable need for democratizing the



access to a cultural and leisure offer of quality, as well as fostering a policy for the uses of time that allow the family, work and leisure life to be conciliated.

### 3. Our commitment

We, the Educating Cities are proactive agents committed to social cohesion. The actions for fostering cohesion are multiple and diverse and are characterised by the fact of having an integral vision and a transversal focus. The rich debates and shared experiences during the Congress of Barcelona highlighted the fact that the Educating Cities are clearly committed to inclusion. For this reason, and in a solemn way, we would like to make the following common commitments public.

1. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to making proactive and preventive policies so as to foster inclusion, and to make concrete proposals for tackling the causes of exclusion.
2. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to improving the processes of personal and social construction of the citizenship:
  - Boosting policies of social inclusion that include the whole reality of the community, oriented by the democratic principle of equality;
  - Establishing the necessary social services for attending the most vulnerable groups, services that foster autonomy and the potential of people, with the aim of achieving their social reinsercion.
  - Providing the resources aimed at cohesion, inclusion and coexistence for favouring the creation of cooperative institutions and individuals.
  - Making an equally-balanced distribution of the resources and fostering civic empowerment.
3. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to fostering lifelong education, formal, non-formal and informal, as one of the most pertinent instruments for developing personal and social skills and to invest in human capital.
4. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to achieving the educational success of all the citizenship and the improvement in the quality of the schooling system, by providing and promoting programmes and actions for increasing the school success in compulsory education and access to lifelong learning, implementing skills development strategies. This involves:
  - Encouraging ways of interaction by educating communities, especially between the school and the family;
  - Boosting teacher and parent training;
  - Combating the stigmatization of stereotypes that make social cohesion and good coexistence especially difficult;
  - Promoting the relation between educational communities located in different places of the city with the aim of strengthening the sense of belonging in the city and the fraternity between social and cultural groups that are usually far apart from each other.
  - Promoting the education of adults so as to provide training opportunities to those who have not had one or who dropped out from their studies.
5. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to generating educational projects with a social aim, that combine learning and community service, with the object that the citizens who participate are trained in the reality and needs of their urban surroundings, contributing to its transformation and improvement.
6. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to creating active spaces for the inclusive interrelation of the citizenship, boosting networking, participative procedures and of deliberation; spaces to cultivate divergent thought and creative and critical thinking through experimentation, discussion and debate in the public life.



7. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to fostering social cohesion, harmonious coexistence, and intergenerational and intercultural relations, promoting the richness of the cultural diversity present in the city and the learning of different languages.
8. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to promoting an accessible and interconnected city by means of a sustainable public transport and adapted to the different needs, a unique city for all the citizenship, free from physical barriers and spatial segregation.
9. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to fighting against inequalities of gender and to boosting educational and social actions for avoiding the feminization of social exclusion.
10. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to fostering dialogue and cooperation between the work world (business, trade unions, professional associations, etc.), work, knowledge, culture and the Municipal administration so as to be able to offer personalised guidance and educational and professional support services that foster educational reinsertion and reactivation or the labour improvement of the citizens, and which generate innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.
11. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to boosting the social responsibility of the companies by encouraging them to dedicate a part of the actions to improve the social cohesion of the urban setting in which they are located; and to strengthen civic-social volunteering in Third Sector organisations, as it is a privileged place for joint meetings and activities between generations and between different cultural, social and ethnic groups that can contribute to improving the quality of life of the citizens and of the neighbourhoods.
12. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to promoting synergies between universities, higher education institutions, research and technology centres, science parks and training centres and schools, making the city a space rich in opportunities for training and learning in the knowledge society.
13. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to offering all the citizenship educational, cultural, sports and leisure opportunities which are close by and within their reach, and which transmit the values of inclusion, solidarity and social cohesion.
14. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to promoting health and well-being to the whole population by means of preventive policies that foster a healthy lifestyle, as well as ensuring access and health care to the whole population.
15. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to carrying out a communication policy that ensures the accessibility of information, that contributes to breaking down the stigmas and negative prejudices associated with certain collectives, and that facilitates access to the information and communication technologies for people in situation or risk of social exclusion.
16. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to promoting initiatives that enable personal, family and work life to be conciliated, and that foster employment and the rationalization of the new uses of time in the city.
17. The Educating Cities commit ourselves to adopting the necessary follow-up and evaluation instruments for implementing these policies, as well as making known and sharing our experience, the knowledge acquired, as well as the results obtained, with other cities.

#### **4. We call upon**

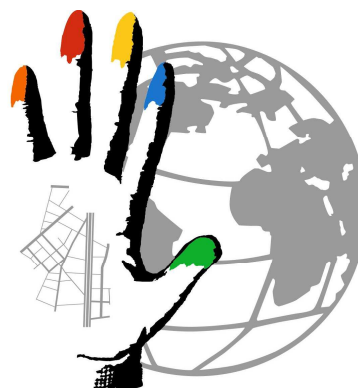
Having confirmed the urban, social, economic and cultural changes mentioned above, and having collectively assumed as Educating Cities a series of commitments as a guide for our present and future action in pursuit of social inclusion, we would like to end this declaration by calling upon the international, national and regional public

actors, and the citizenship as a whole, to contribute in a co-responsible way to the achievement of these goals.

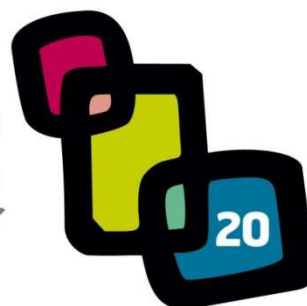
For this reason, we call on governments, institutions and citizens:

1. To recognise the role played by the local governments as agents of inclusion and as generators of opportunities and solutions for old and new causes of exclusion.
2. For a greater decentralisation, by the state and regional powers, of the key competences for the promotion of social inclusion, in favour of policies of proximity, ensuring a suitable redistribution of the resources.
3. For a greater commitment, by all the public administrations, to contribute the provision of human, infrastructural and financial resources, necessary for developing and sustaining the required policies of social inclusion.
4. For a commitment, between the local entities from the same metropolitan area, the multi-level coordination and consultation of policies and services with the aim of achieving a greater efficacy in the actions of social inclusion.
5. For an active involvement, by the organised civil society, especially from the civic-social Third Sector, and of all the citizenship, in the definition and implementation of policies of social inclusion of the cities.

International Association of  
**Educating Cities**  
Association Internationale des  
**Villes Éducatrices**  
Asociación Internacional de  
**Ciudades Educadoras**  
Associació Internacional de  
**Ciutats Educadores**



**13<sup>th</sup> International Congress  
of Educating Cities 2014**  
Barcelona 13-16 November



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Ajuntament de  
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